

Dooley Route Box 22  
Boles, Ark., 72926

December 1, 1972

Dear Jean and Dick,

Enclosed is a copy of the letter which I have mailed to Mr. Jim Moorman. Lets hope it may do some good. Mary and I personally appreciate very much the grand effort you have made in behalf of Mineral King.

I dare not even mention my feelings about the disastrous election Nov. 7 without getting riled, so I'd better not get into that.

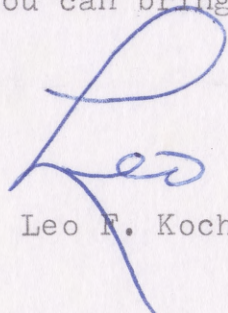
The book on Mental RetARDATION SOUNDS TERRIFIC. Congratulations and keep up the fine work.

We had a nice letter from Mom after Thanksgiving and apparently all is well and she had a fine time. We thought of being there but are simply not in financial condition to make such a trip. Part of getting along on an income low enough not to pay any income tax is getting along without making long trips.

This damn electric typewriter is just too fast for me so excuse the typos.

Much love to both of you and we are looking forward to seeing you and as much of your family as you can bring along next summer.

Yours truly,



Leo F. Koch



Dooley Route Box 22  
Boles, Arkansas 72926  
December 1, 1972

Mr. James Moorman  
Suite 311  
311 California Street  
San Francisco, California

Dear Mr. Moorman:

May I add my voice to those supporting the Sierra Club in its effort to prevent the spoilation of the Mineral King area in California by certain commercial interests.

Enclosed are two sheets of information about my professional background and education establishing my status as a person with special knowledge of what is at stake in the maintenance of the Mineral King area in its natural state, or at least as close to that as is yet possible.

Furthermore, I have added three sheets of a list of publications by me to show that before my retirement I was the leading authority in the study of Californian Bryophytes.

With this background and qualifications, I can say without hesitation that the conversion of the Mineral King valley into any sort of commercial establishment catering to large numbers of customers would be an ecological and cultural disaster of major significance. Such alterations in man's recent history in the United States have universally been disasters.

I say ecological disaster because I know from my personal exploration and research in the area that the ecological balance there would be permanently altered. The vegetation would be drastically affected for the worse, and with that the life of the animal population there now would be critically threatened.

In turn, such a change would be a serious blow to scientific research in many fields, and especially in mine. This threat is particularly apt for the Mineral King area because it is part of a unique ecological situation which harbors many distinctive and unusual life forms.

For example, in my research I was able to demonstrate that the bryophytes of California include a very high percentage of species that are not found anywhere else in the world. A large number of these species have extremely restricted



ranges and are already so scarce that few scientists, let alone laymen, have been privileged to find them; and therefore our knowledge of these unique life forms is based on extremely fragmentary evidence at this time. In other parts of California, I can cite cases where such life forms may never be found again simply because the environment has been so profoundly altered by the encroachments of man. Undoubtedly this may happen in the Mineral King valley if commercial interests are not prevented from ruining it.

At the time of my retirement, I had made but a bare beginning of the research that is needed to complete the ecological study of bryophytes in Mineral King. The study of other kinds of plants and animals is as, or nearly as, incomplete. To disturb the ecological balance of the valley now probably eliminates the satisfactory conclusion of such studies. Our future knowledge of the endemic species of the area and of the ecology of the valley hinges on maintaining it in at least a major part as a refuge for that purpose.

If any of the statements I have made need amplification in your opinion, I shall be most happy to cooperate.

Sincerely,

Leo F. Koch